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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/722,667	11/26/2003	Toshikazu Sakurai	FP03-168US	7688
1218	7590	08/06/2004	EXAMINER GILMAN, ALEXANDER	
CASELLA & HESPOS 274 MADISON AVENUE NEW YORK, NY 10016			ART UNIT 2833	PAPER NUMBER

DATE MAILED: 08/06/2004

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No. 10/722,667	Applicant(s) SAKURAI ET AL.	
	Examiner Alexander D Gilman	Art Unit 2833	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 26 November 2003.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-15 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-15 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 06 November 2003 is/are: a) ☒ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☒ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| 3) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date <u>11/06/2003</u> . | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

Claims 1-7 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Griffin.

With regard to claim 1, Griffin (US 3,998,517) discloses a joint connector (10), comprising a housing (42,20) with at least one pair of connecting portions (44, 38) into which mating connectors (46, 28) are fittable, at least one joint terminal (40) having a plurality of terminal pieces (38) located in both connecting portions (33, 38) and at least one ground terminal (col. 2, lines 51-54) having a grounding portion (52) and a plurality of terminal pieces (38, 44) in at least one of the connecting portions .

With regard to claim 2, Griffin discloses (Fig. 6) the joint terminal (40) is formed such that the terminal pieces (38) project from two different lateral edges of a busbar (40).

With regard to claim 3, Griffin discloses (Fig. 6) that the ground terminal (40) is formed such that the terminal pieces (38) project from at least one lateral edge of a busbar (40) having the grounding portion (44) at an end thereof.

With regard to claim 4, Griffin discloses (Fig. 5b) that the joint terminal and the ground terminal are mounted at different levels in the housing (42)

With regard to claims 5, 6, Griffin discloses (Fig. 5b) that the joint terminal is mounted into the housing (42), which has insertion grooves, by pressing.

With regard to claim 7, Griffin discloses (Fig. 5c) that press-in holes are provided in the housing (30) for pressing in corresponding terminal pieces .

Art Unit: 2833

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claims 8-15 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Seki in view of Griffin.

With regard to claims 8, 9. Seki (US 5,908,322) discloses a joint connector (1), comprising: a housing (7) molded from a resin material and having opposite power and load sides, an intermediate wall between the power and load sides, a power receptacle (2a1) extending into the power side and to the intermediate wall, at least one load receptacle (2b1) extending into the load side and to the intermediate wall, and at least one joint terminal having a bus bar (3) and plurality of terminal pieces (5, 5') projecting from both opposite sides of the bus bar.

Seki does not specifically disclose that the terminals are mounted by press-fitting and one of the four terminals in the receptacles function as a grounding terminal.

Griffin discloses (Fig. 5) that the terminals are mounted by press-fitting and one of the four terminals in the receptacles function as a grounding terminal.

Therefore, it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to mount the terminals by press-fitting and assign one of the four terminals in the receptacles as a grounding terminal, as taught by Griffin, if the mating connectors include the joint and ground terminals.

With regard to claim 10, Seki when modified by Griffin, does not disclose that at least one press-in hole has no terminal piece therein.

It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to have at least one press-in hole without terminal piece therein, if the mating connector's terminal configuration does not require the respective terminal

With regard to claim 11, Seki when modified by Griffin, discloses (Griffin) that the joint terminal

Art Unit: 2833

and the ground terminal are mounted at different levels in the housing.


With regard to claims 12-15, Seki when modified by Griffin, discloses the structure which is manufactured using step claimed.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Alexander D Gilman whose telephone number is 571 272-2004. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Friday, 10:30 a.m. - 8:00 p.m.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Paula A. Bradley can be reached on 571 272-2800 ext. 33. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

08/03/2004


ALEXANDER GILMAN
PRIMARY EXAMINER